

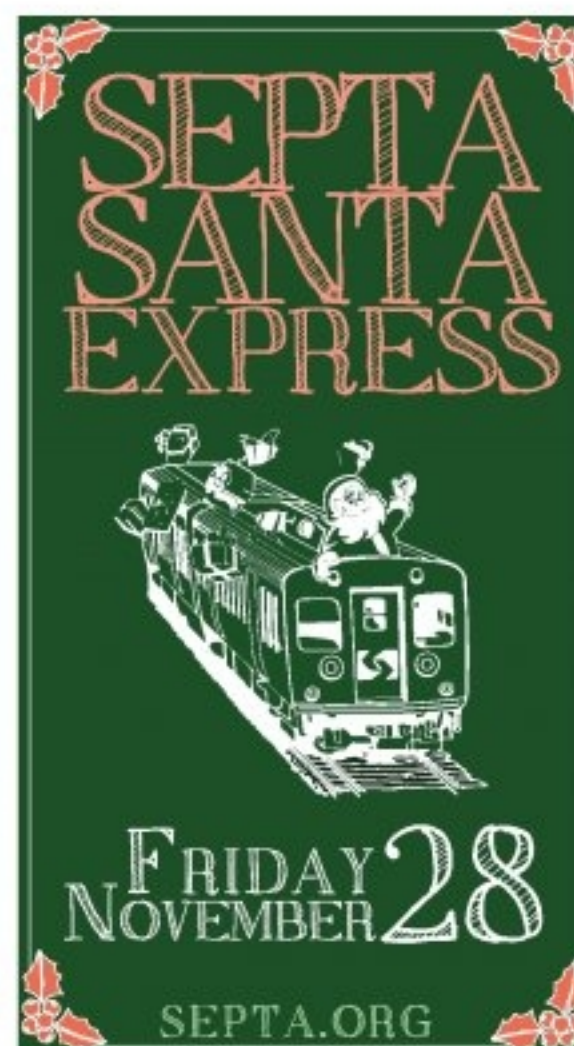
YOUR 2014 GUIDE TO BLACK FRIDAY

WE HIGHLIGHT THE BEST DEALS ALL OVER TOWN. PAGES 22-27

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Tuesday, November 25, 2014 www.metro.us | t: MetroPhilly | f: MetroPhilly



Will sports gambling finally come to Philly?

PAGE 04

Lisa Bonet stays out of the Bill Cosby fray

PAGE 18



How to survive travel for the holiday

PAGE 28



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1 NEWS

Top 3

The Best of Metro.us

1 The worst dressed celebrities of the 2014 American Music Awards

2 #TheWord: Gwyneth Paltrow strikes back at 'jailbird' Martha Stewart

3 PHOTOS: Lindsey Duke's sexiest pictures on Instagram



On the go

Want to read Metro on your mobile device? Get the app! All you have to do is search for Metro US in the App Store or Google Play and to get all the latest in news, sports, lifestyle and entertainment for free.

Class comparing Mumia to MLK Jr. back in Calif.

Philadelphia.

A fallen officer's mural dedication is jarred by news of a California curriculum.

Just 30 minutes before a new mural honoring her late husband was unveiled on Monday, Maureen Faulkner was dealt a new blow.

Faulkner, the widow of slain Philadelphia Police Officer Daniel Faulkner, had learned that in California, the Oakland Unified School District will resurrect an optional curriculum for high school students that includes comparisons between Martin Luther King Jr. and Mumia Abu-Jamal — the man convicted of Daniel Faulkner's 1981 murder.

"It just hit about 30 minutes ago, when I was coming here," Faulkner said after the ceremony to unveil a new mural in honor of her late husband at 11th and Vine streets, on the wall of the 6th Police District headquarters. "The Oakland schools are going to allow Mumia Abu-Jamal's curriculum to be in their schools, to teach children."

First created in 2003 with federal grant funding, Oakland superintendent Antwan Wilson took down the "Urban Dreams" curriculum in April after Fox News located an old



Police officers at a dedication ceremony on Monday of a mural in honor of Philadelphia Police Officer Daniel Faulkner, who was shot and killed by Mumia Abu-Jamal on Dec. 9, 1981. The new mural is located at 11th and Winter Streets in Center City. / CHARLES MOSTOLLER

Lesson plan.

The materials do not "coerce kids" into any conclusion, Flint said.

- The San Francisco Chronicle quoted the curriculum as asking students to "critically examine a possible parallel between Martin Luther King Jr., and

someone else many believe is currently targeted by the U.S. government, Mumia Abu-Jamal," and "consider the claim by Abu-Jamal's supporters that the government sees him as enough of a threat to want to kill him. Do students agree that this is a possibility?"

copy of the curriculum online, leading to an outcry from Maureen Faulkner and Philly's Fraternal Order of Police.

The references to Abu-Jamal are within a curriculum called "Urban Dreams," in a section devoted to King.

On Nov. 18, Wilson announced that after review, the curriculum would again be placed on the district's website as an option for teachers.

"They're going to be modeling him after Martin Luther King, which is such an atrocity, because

Martin Luther King was such a kind, peaceful man, who wanted a positive outcome for people of all colors," Faulkner said. "For them to even correlate him with a cold-blooded murderer is absolutely a tragedy."

Oakland's school district spokesman, Troy Flint, said the curriculum was found to be in line with state standards, and will "teach kids to be critical thinkers."

"I have a lot of sympathy for Mrs. Faulkner and I understand her position, but from an academic perspective, the lesson is not one of equivalence between Martin Luther King and Mumia Abu-Jamal," Flint said. "It's simply looking at different ele-

ments of their lives, and there's really a narrow slice of their narrative where there may be some intersection. That's not the same as placing Mumia on a pedestal with Martin Luther King."

For now, the new mural, which was unveiled at a service attended by more than 100 police officers, will honor Faulkner's memory.

"I wanted it to look like a memorial a family member would set up for him in their house," said artist Jon Laidacker. "It was also a goal of mine not to touch the controversy surrounding him at all."

SAM NEWHOUSE
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SEPTA. Union says conditions unsafe

The Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers wants the Federal Railroad Administration to reject SEPTA's request for a "safety waiver" and hold hearings on the number of 14-hour shifts and six-day weeks regional rail conductors work.

"We've seen some terrible accidents due to sleep deprivation on other railroads, we don't need

that to happen here," said union vice president Steve Bruno. SEPTA said it's hiring more engineers to address the scheduling problem. "There are no indications that fatigue has played a role in engineer decertification incidents — or incidents in which engineers violated safety rules — since the waiver was granted," SEPTA said.

SAM NEWHOUSE

Chester County

Lincoln U president resigns after rape comments

After three years as Lincoln University's president, Robert Jennings resigned Monday following controversial comments to female students about rape.

Temple alumna Valerie I. Harrison has stepped in as acting president.



Robert Jennings / COURTESY

Lincoln's board of trustees announced that they would conduct a

"review" of Jennings after he told female students in September that three female students had falsely reported rape.

Jennings' talk, which was recorded and posted on YouTube, included the words, "Men treat you, treat women, the way women allow us to treat them. ... We will use you up if you allow us to use you up."

Jennings later apologized for the comments. **METRO**

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New casino puts sports betting discussions back on the table

Let it roll. Casino plan could bring legalized sports betting to Philadelphia.

Philadelphia's new casino, which is positioning itself right in the heart of the city's professional sports complex, has the potential to bring something unique to the table — sports betting.

Sports betting is big business, according to the University of Nevada Las Vegas' Center for Gaming Researching. In 2013, \$3.6 billion was bet on sporting events, even though Nevada, Delaware, Oregon and Montana are the only places where it's not outlawed by the federal government.

David Cordish, CEO and



Rendering of Live! Hotel & Casino, awarded the city's second casino license last week. / COURTESY PHOTO

Quoted

"Do you really think that one of the 76ers, making between \$3 million and \$20 million a year, will be bribed by a sports bettor? Never gonna happen."

Alan Levitan, gambling expert

President of the Cordish Cos. — one of the firms, along with Greenwood Gaming and Entertainment, that was awarded Philadelphia's second casino license last week — said he sees sports betting coming to Philadelphia.

"I think it's going to come," Cordish said in an interview. "But it's very

complicated with the federal government; it's not just up to the Commonwealth."

In May, the Pennsylvania Legislative Budget and Finance Committee released a report on gaming. It said sports betting at casinos could garner close to \$150 million for the state, while online sports betting

could top \$160 million.

Cordish, who plans to open "Live! Casino & Hotel" in the sports complex in the next two to three years, said he feels sports betting is an untapped revenue source.

"The commissioner of the NBA came out a few weeks ago and said, he's in favor of it," Cordish said. "But, look, that's over my pay grade, but in my opinion, in due course it's coming."

Tony Ricci, CEO of Parx Casino in suburban Bensalem, said he can also envision a future where sports betting is the norm.

"There does seem to be momentum going that way," he said.

With the Philadelphia area's traditional gambling center, Atlantic City, on the rocks, New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie is championing a law that would allow



Visit **Metro.us** to learn more about the plans for the casino.

sports betting at his state's casinos and racetracks. He's been slapped with lawsuits by the NCAA and the country's four major professional sports leagues to block the move.

The leagues say sports betting would invite attempts to fix games and destroy the public's perception of the integrity of professional sports.



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In addition to Toys for Tots, your toy donations go to local families who are receiving help from Institute for the Development of African-American Youth. **METRO**



Philadelphia named finalist to host Democrats in 2016

In the running. Philadelphia is a finalist to host the Democratic convention.

Philadelphia Democrats can breathe a collective sigh of relief.

The city made it through the Democratic National Committee's final round of cuts in the race to host the 2016 Democratic National Convention. The short list also includes Brooklyn and Columbus, Ohio.

The committee will announce the winning city next year.

When the committee visited Philadelphia in August, fundraising efforts, security and logistics were the three main issues cited.



Mayor Michael Nutter chows down at Pat's Steaks with members of the DNC Technical Advisory Group in August. / CHARLES MOSTOLLER

By the numbers

Conventions can prove costly:

- **2004: Boston**
\$95 million
- **2008: Denver**
\$54 million
- **2012: Charlotte**
\$55 million

Former Gov. Ed Rendell — who chairs the non-profit Philadelphia 2016, which is tasked with raising money for the convention — said in a statement that it's still a wide-open competition.

"We must use the time between now and the announcement of the winner to make it clear that Philadelphia is the very best choice for the Democrats in 2016," Rendell

said. "Now is the time for the city and the entire region to work in partnership to win the bid."

"We're unquestionably the best site for the convention — we have the best venue, a vibrant and easily accessible Center City, and a team that knows how to stage major events like political conventions," Mayor Michael Nutter said. "We have to do all that we can to close the deal and make sure that Philadelphia wins the bid."

Congressman Bob Brady said he's worked 15 months to win hosting rights. "Today, we are in the red zone. But like any Eagles fan knows, there's a difference between being in the red zone and putting points on the board," Brady said.



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Show them the money

Fundraising key to win

Former Gov. Ed Rendell, who chaired the committee that promoted Philadelphia as host city, said in August that the city raised \$68 million when it hosted the Republican National Convention in 2000.

"I think we can easily replicate that," Rendell said in August.

The federal government no longer gives convention cities \$18 million to help pay the bills, but it does fork over \$50 million for security, he said.

"And that will defray a lot of the police costs that the city absorbed in 2000," Rendell said.

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Fatal shooting

Video of
Cleveland
police
shooting
released

Cleveland officials said on Monday they have released a video recording of the fatal shooting of a 12-year-old boy by police to representatives of the boy's family, and will eventually release it to the public.

Tamir E. Rice was shot by police on Saturday after he brandished a pellet gun at a Cleveland recreation center. He died of his injuries on Sunday.

Cleveland Police Chief Calvin Williams said at a news conference that the Rice family had been invited to see the video, but had declined. He said family representatives have had a chance to view it, and will discuss it with the family.

REUTERS

No probable cause to indict officer in Ferguson shooting

Decision. Grand jury declines to bring murder charges against Ferguson Police Officer Darren Wilson.

A white Missouri police officer who shot and killed an unarmed black teenager avoided indictment by a state grand jury, raising concerns of a return to rioting that engulfed the St. Louis suburb of Ferguson after the August shooting.

People were "on edge," Missouri Gov. Jay Nixon said before the announcement. He urged "people on all sides show tolerance, mutual respect and restraint."

The grand jury, composed of nine whites and three blacks, declined to



Demonstrators gather outside the Ferguson Police Department. / GETTY IMAGES

charge Darren Wilson, 28, for the Aug. 9 killing of Michael Brown, 18, in a street encounter, St. Louis County Chief Prosecutor Robert P. McCulloch announced Monday. The panel began hearing evidence Aug. 20 after days of protests triggered a police response that was criticized as militaristic, and

2 Black women 1 Black man 3 White women 6 White men



which rekindled a national debate on race and law enforcement.

Some eyewitnesses said Brown was shot as he raised his hands in surrender. Police said he attacked Wilson while the officer was in his patrol car. The federal government is examining the Ferguson Police Department, its training and operating procedures. Attorney General Eric Holder said the investigation was prompted by conversations he had with residents who expressed a "deep mistrust" of the city's police, who are mostly white in a majority black city.

"People consistently expressed concerns stemming from specific alleged incidents, from general policing practices, and from the lack of diversity on Ferguson's police force," the attorney general said at a press conference in September.

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Hagel resigns as defense secretary

Source. Hagel privately expressed frustration to colleagues at the administration's Iraq and Syria strategies.

U.S. Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel resigned on Monday, leaving under pressure as President Barack Obama faces critical national security challenges, including fighting Islamic State in Iraq and Syria and revising plans to exit Afghanistan.

It was the first major change to Obama's Cabinet since Democrats were routed in midterm elections three weeks ago, and Republicans, who took over the Senate and now control both houses of Congress, are looking to bring changes.

Hagel was appointed less than two years ago as Obama pushed his signature program of winding down wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, a process now being upended with U.S. re-engagement in Iraq and greater military cooperation with Kabul.

Officials said publicly the decision was mutual but privately others said he had been forced out.

He raised questions about Obama's strategy toward Syria in a two-page internal policy memo that leaked this fall in which he warned that Obama's policy was in jeopardy due to its failure to clarify its intentions toward Syrian President Bashar al-Assad.

Obama has insisted the United States can go after Islamic State militants without addressing Assad, who the United States would like to leave power.

Quoted

"There's no question he was fired."

A U.S. official with knowledge of the matter



HAGEL HAD BEEN CRITICIZED BY SOME FOR FAILING TO CLEARLY ARTICULATE POLICY. | GETTY IMAGES

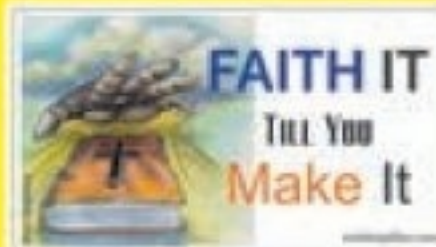
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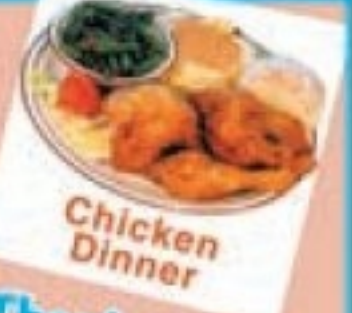
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U.S. shale oil, like the Monterey Shale formation in McKittrick, California, is contributing to the commodity's falling price. / GETTY IMAGES

Oil prices could fall to \$60 a barrel

Oil. Prices have been falling since the summer due to abundant supply.

Some commodity fund managers believe oil prices could slide to \$60 per barrel if OPEC does not agree to a significant output cut when it meets in Vienna this week.

Brent crude futures LCOc1 have fallen by a third since June, touching a four-year low of \$76.76 a barrel on Nov. 14.

They could tumble further if OPEC does not agree to cut at least one million barrels per day, according to some commodity fund managers' forecasts.

That could send Brent down to around \$60, said Daniel Bathe, of Lupus Alpha Commodity Invest Fund.

"Herding behavior and a shift to net negative speculative positions should accelerate the price plunge," he said.

Yet fund managers and brokerage analysts are divided over whether OPEC will reach an agreement

on cutting output.

Bathe put the likelihood at no more than 50 percent.

The abundant supply is partly from U.S. shale oil and because of low demand growth, particularly in Europe and Asia.

As a result, some investors believe a small cut of around 500,000 bpd would not be enough to calm the markets.

With member states struggling to balance budgets, many OPEC countries will be pushing for an output cut when OPEC meets in Vienna on Nov. 27.

"Prices below \$80 are putting significant strain on the cartel's weakest members such as Venezuela," said Nicolas Robin, a commodities fund manager at Threadneedle. **REUTERS**

Quoted

"The market would question the credibility of OPEC and its influence on global oil markets if there was no cut." Bathe

Fast power

Israeli firm says it can recharge your phone in 30 seconds

An Israeli company says it has developed technology that can charge a mobile phone in a few seconds and an electric car in minutes, advances that could transform two of the world's most dynamic consumer industries.

Using nano-technology to synthesize artificial molecules, Tel Aviv-based StoreDot says it has devel-



A bio-organic charger system
GETTY IMAGES

oped a battery that can store a much higher charge more quickly, in effect acting like a super-dense sponge to soak up power and retain it.

While the prototype is currently far too bulky for a mobile phone, the company believes it will be ready by 2016 to market a slim battery that can absorb and deliver a day's power for a smartphone in just 30 seconds.

"These are new materials, they have never been developed before," said Doron Myersdorf, founder and chief executive of StoreDot, whose investors include Russian billionaire and Chelsea soccer club owner Roman Abramovich.

REUTERS



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Crime

Confession of accused Etan Patz killer can be used: Court

The confession of a man accused of killing 6-year-old Etan Patz, who vanished from a New York street more than three decades ago, can be used as evidence against him, a Manhattan court ruled on Monday.

Pedro Hernandez, who confessed to police in 2012 that he had choked Patz and stuffed him alive in a garbage bag in 1979, has been charged with murder.

Hernandez, a New Jersey man who at the time of the boy's disappearance worked at a deli in his SoHo neighborhood,



no longer admits to the crime, said his lawyer, Harvey Fishbein.

Patz's disappearance on May 25, 1979, on his first walk alone to the school bus stop in Manhattan, drew national attention.

His case prompted President Ronald Reagan to sign into law the Missing Children's Assistance Act, and he was one of the first missing children whose face appeared on a milk carton.

Patz's body was never found, but he was legally declared dead in 2001.

In a police interview taped during more than seven hours of interrogation, Hernandez said he lured Patz with a cold soda into the basement of the deli where he worked.

There, he said, he strangled Patz and put his body in a garbage bag that he threw in an alley nearby.

Hernandez's lawyers have argued that he was not properly read his legal rights at the time of the confession and did not understand them.

REUTERS

Gov. Cuomo warns Buffalo area of roof collapse risks



Quoted

"If you are in a building and you hear creaks, or you hear groans, please contact the authorities immediately and get out of the building." Cuomo

Prepared. Thousands of sandbags are in place around the city, said Erie County spokesman Peter Anderson.

New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo warned residents of Buffalo, New York, which is still digging out from as much as seven feet of snow, to beware of roof collapses as the weather warms.

With temperatures expected to reach 59 degrees, the region faced a high risk of floods as the snow melts, though so far has escaped major flooding, Cuomo said Monday.

He warned people to look for signs of their roofs weakening under the heavy weight of the snow, noting that noises were a warning sign of a

possible collapse.

The region was braced for high winds and downed trees on Monday afternoon, with the National Weather Service warning that winds would blow at 25 to 35 miles per hour, with gusts up to 60 mph. The waterlogged ground made it more likely that trees would fall, raising the risk that homes and businesses would lose power.

Larry Miceli, 59, was busy on Monday putting sandbags around his home, located in a low-lying area not far from a creek.

"If the creek goes over its banks, the water will eventually run to where I am," Miceli said. He said the storm marked the third time this year his house has been at risk of flooding.

"Sometimes you wonder how much you can take. It just keeps coming," said Miceli. "It doesn't seem right." REUTERS

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Briefs

Temple's 'It's On Us' campaign tackles sexual assault

Student athletes at Temple University are taking a stand along with the White House to stop sexual assault on college campuses.

The "It's On Us" movement aims to change the way the issue of sexual assault is talked about on campus. A variety of student athletes appear in a new YouTube video discussing the issue. **MOLLY CONGDON**

A generous gift for Haverford College

Several thank you notes from current students and young alumni of Haverford College are likely to soon appear on the doorstep of the Jaharis Family Foundation.

Earlier this month, it was announced that the foundation is bestowing a \$10 million gift to the college — with \$2 million going to recent graduates who are struggling with student loan debt. **MOLLY CONGDON**



One college is giving recent grads some student debt relief. **MOODBOARD**

Applying to college? Clean up your social media first

First impressions.

It might be a good time to get a new email address.

High school seniors across the country are putting the final touches on their college applications. But as they're editing their essays and résumés one last time, they may forget to do one more important thing — spruce up their social media.

A new report by Kaplan Test Prep found that college admissions officials say that high schoolers are getting savvier when it comes to the impression they are making online and that fewer students are making mistakes that could derail their admissions chances. To make sure you're putting your best foot forward, follow these three simple steps before applying to school.



Think about setting some of your social media accounts to private. / FUSE

1 Create a professional email address. Is your personal email address your nickname or an inside joke among your friends? Now's the time to get a more grown-up-sounding address. You won't impress admissions officials with an email address such as FutureMrsHarryStyles@[company].com.

2 Set your Twitter account to private. While it's fun for you and your friends to tweet at each other about your weekends and favorite shows, the whole world doesn't need to see. You can always switch it back to a public account once you're safely accepted at one of the universities you applied to.

3 Don't criticize schools online. Did you just have the worst visit to a campus ever? Be careful who you share those details with. Many schools track their mentions on Facebook and Twitter.



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Common Black Friday mistakes people make

Shopping tips.
Don't fall into these traps.

Black Friday is one of the most chaotic days of the year, so if you plan on venturing out and taking advantage of the deals, you need to have your game face on. Here, we round up some pitfalls to avoid.

Mistake No. 1: Failing to inspect your merchandise Many companies make modified versions of electronics solely with Black Friday in mind. Take time to really inspect them before you get to the register and make sure they have all the features you were expecting.

Mistake No. 2: Throwing your budget out the window To avoid the



End Black Friday with everything you want and your sanity intact by avoiding these common mistakes. / GETTY IMAGES

financial stress that's common during the holidays, prepare a list of who you need to buy gifts for and what you want to buy ahead of time and stick to it. Otherwise, you'll end up with a bunch of \$10 DVDs you'll never watch and another tablet you really don't need.

Mistake No. 3: Waiting until Cyber Monday to save big online Contrary to the name, retailers aren't waiting until Dec. 1 to roll out their Cyber Monday deals; many start on Thanksgiving Day. Check out what items you want to buy ahead of time to make sure they're in

Mistake No. 4

Forgetting about Cyber Monday

Many of the same great deals you can get in-stores will also be offered online. Enter your billing information ahead of time so when Cyber Monday starts, all you have to do is select the items you want and click "checkout."

stock and deliverable by Christmas. If they're not and you plan on giving them as gifts, you need to know so you can comparison shop ahead of time before the deals start.



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Crucial year-end stock market trends

Being a successful stock trader is not just about making good stock picks; you have to understand the underlying trends. Here are three year-end trends that are happening now that you should keep in mind.

Trend 1: Tax loss selling

Because you're allowed to deduct your stock market losses from your annual income, thus paying less in taxes, investors sell their worst performing stocks into the year-end in order to utilize those tax losses for the current year. If you have losses now and wait to sell any time in early

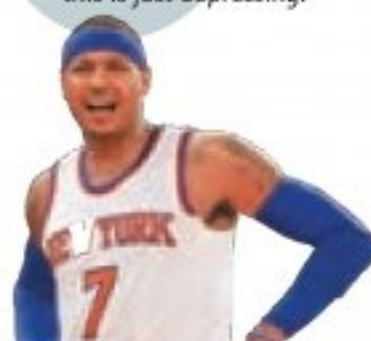
2015, you can't use those tax losses until you pay next year's taxes. This opens the door to some supreme value deals on stocks that are oversold not due to anything the companies did but due to tax reasons only.

Trend 2: The January effect

This is the important-to-know seasonality trend where beaten-down stocks often bounce and rebound sharply in January, as there's no more tax loss selling to keep the stock prices low. Stocks trading between \$1 and \$5 per share that have been hammered over the

I know hundreds of traders who are making six and seven figures this year, many more than ever in the past. Thank you, bull market!

All my favorite teams, the Knicks, the NY Giants and Notre Dame football are having horrendous seasons. I love sports, but this is just depressing.



past year, especially toward the end of the year, spike 20 percent to even 50 percent in a few hours or days every January. And because seasoned pros know this, they often start buying these near-bankrupt companies in December in order to get in before the big January spikes.

Trend 3: Window dressing

Just as stocks that have been crushed are sold for tax purposes, the strongest stocks of the year are bought, making them even stronger. This

For exclusive commentary, visit Metro.us/blogs.

year-end buying has nothing to do with how good the companies are; Wall Street just wants to appear more knowledgeable and successful to those who pay their salaries. Using this knowledge, I don't bet against the strongest stocks nor do I buy the weakest stocks heading into year-end; although I am always on the lookout for potential value buys given the January Effect and will buy beaten-down stocks that begin spiking for seemingly unknown reasons.

What Sykes likes this week

The U.S. stock market is simply on fire; I'm having my best trading year ever, as I'm now up 170 in 2014.

Bill Cosby is learning that celebrity status does not protect him from the serious charges being leveled against him — more celebrities need to learn this.



The Cosby controversy proves there are two courts: legal courts and, perhaps more important to celebrities, the court of public opinion.



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CULTURE



Twitter feed

Today, Chloe Grace Moretz has some thoughts on style, Katy Perry is putting things in perspective, Bette Midler is trying to save you some time and money, Patton Oswalt is preparing for things to get worse and Ricky Gervais has some simple advice for you.

@ChloeGMoretz: Our fashion needs to go back to 1928 everyone looked so beautiful and appropriate and sexy at the same time, 2014 = short skirts/crop tops

@katyperry: 3 AMAS & SUPER BOWL?! Not long ago I was playing guitar on the streets of Santa Barbara for maybe 20 bucks a day & an avocado. Wow, life!

@BetteMidler: Why pay to see The Hunger Games this week when you can just watch footage of Black Friday stampedes next week?

@pattonoswalt: I just realized this Bill Cosby horrorshow is gonna spur a think piece about Tone Loc's "Funky Cold Medina." #yuck

@rickygervais: Have a fun day and try not to kill anyone.

Katy Perry definitely doing the Super Bowl

The NFL has confirmed rumors that Katy Perry will be performing at the next Super Bowl halftime show, taking place Feb. 1 in Glendale, Arizona. Perry got in on the announcement action with a video discussing various ideas for the show in her "testing facility," including kittens and edible glitter. After recent years featuring Madonna and Beyonce, it will be interesting to see what Perry can bring to the ridiculously high-profile gig — and what Illuminati references conspiracy theorists can glean from it.

Tour director Baz Halpin is really risking the ire of Taylor Swift by working with Perry on the show. I'm thinking he maybe didn't take Swift's alleged threat too seriously. Also, way to go on Perry's part for managing to steal plenty of focus during the American Music Awards despite not actually being there. She didn't even need glitter for that move.



KATY PERRY AND THE STADIUM MADE OF EDIBLE GLITTER
YOUTUBE, PEPSI

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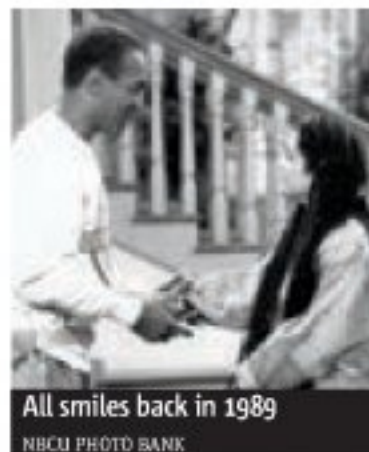
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Lisa Bonet not tweeting about Bill Cosby — or on Twitter at all

Amid the frenzy regarding Bill Cosby and the growing number of women accusing him of sexual assault over the years, the Internet is hungry for commentary by anyone who has worked with him. Perhaps it's a little too hungry, as it turns out, because everyone was a little too quick to believe former "Cosby Show" star Lisa Bonet was tweeting about her old boss. "According to the karma of past actions, one's destiny unfolds, even though everyone wants to be so lucky," a tweet from an account claiming to be Bonet's read. "Nothing stays in the dark [forever]." Here's the thing, though: Bonet isn't actually on Twitter. "Lisa Bonet has no



All smiles back in 1989
NBCU PHOTO BANK

social media of any kind," her manager tells People magazine. "Any posts made in her name were made by impersonators with unverified accounts. She also has no comment on the ongoing story." This also casts serious doubt on the authenticity of this Phylicia Rashad Tumblr that I follow.

Prince Jackson valiantly struggling to lead normal life

Michael Jackson's oldest offspring, Prince Jackson, turns 18 in less than three months, meaning he'll be free of the court-ordered guardianship that's been minding his assets — and some more opportunistically minded folks



GETTY IMAGES

have taken note. Among them? Uncle Jermaine Jackson, who "has been trying to get a reality show going" featuring the teen but can't seem to "get it off the ground," a source tells Radar Online. Prince, for his part, has said he wants to go to college. Smart kid.

Ryan Reynolds excited to have a buddy who can't leave

Blake Lively is currently gestating her first official release with husband Ryan Reynolds, and the father-to-be could not be more excited — mostly because he could use a friend, as it turns out. "I'm just excited about having a buddy. We don't know if it's a boy or a girl yet, but whatever it is, you have this tether to reality that never goes away," he tells People magazine. Tether to reality? That never goes away? I mean, that's a lot of responsibility to put on one kid.



RYAN REYNOLDS, BLAKE LIVELY AND THEIR REALITY TETHER
GETTY IMAGES

Waka Flocka Flame, cough drop pitchman



GETTY IMAGES

"Love & Hip Hop Atlanta" star Waka Flocka Flame has got a new gig: pitching Pine Brothers brand cough drops for, ahem, minor sore throat relief. Over the strains of soothing piano music and with a cloud of suspicious smoke billowing next to him, the rapper professes that he "can't live without my Pine Brothers." Honestly, it's nice to see more companies blatantly going after the stoner market — you should see the Jack in the Box late-night menu ads in California — but doesn't someone already own the rights to that "because you're worth it" tag line?

Daily video

Friends of the Galaxy

Here's another example of two great tastes that taste great together. YouTuber and mash-up master Robert Jones has taken Marvel's oddball hit "Guardians of the

Galaxy" and set it to the opening of "Friends." And the results are delightful. The only question is, really, which one is Chris Pratt? Is he the Chandler, the Joey or the Rachel? Because Rocket Raccoon is definitely the Monica.



YOUTUBE, ROBERT JONES

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Jo Piazza features rule-breaking nuns — not ruler-rapping nuns — in her new book, out now. / DIGITAL VISION

The secret, activism-filled lives of nuns in America

Religion. Author Jo Piazza explores the misunderstood lives of Catholic sisters.

Since the release of "If Nuns Ruled the World: Ten Sisters on a Mission" this fall, author Jo Piazza says that she receives a new note from a different Catholic nun nearly every time she checks her email. "It's a lot of 'Thank you for telling this story that hasn't been told yet. Thank you for acknowledging us,'" says Piazza, whose book was recently featured at a literary salon hosted by the New York Foundation and author Aidan Donnelley Rowley. "And that's the part that sort of breaks my heart."

The author says that traveling with and getting to know each of the 10 sisters she profiles in the book taught her just how misunderstood and stereotyped nuns were, by both the Catholic community and the general population. "I'm a very healthy and open-minded agnostic," says Piazza, who attended Catholic schools growing up. "I think I love the nuns so much because they don't wear their religion on their sleeves, they just practice it."

Piazza shared some of the other things she learned while writing the book with Metro.

Nuns are not meek

When you think of a Catholic nun, you probably don't picture a

Nuns love a certain Comedy Central star

"Nuns love Stephen Colbert," dishes Piazza, which should be no surprise as the late-night host is well known for teaching Sunday school at his local church. Other things the nuns raved to Piazza about are red wine, cats and baseball.

woman who volunteers as an abortion clinic escort or a woman in jail for protesting against nuclear weapons. But those are just two examples of women Piazza met with while writing her book. "These are the women who are the very first feminists," says

Piazza. "They were running colleges, they were running hospitals. They have amazing careers."

Nuns are not just teachers

Piazza says she hears all the time from former Catholic school students who complain about the times they were hit with rulers in class. "It's mostly men that say that, too. And then I just say, 'Did you deserve it? You probably were a little jerk, weren't you?'" she says. "That's just one of the many myths about nuns that people like to say. And it's not true; it's just a stereotype. All of the nuns I know are just loving, dynamic women."



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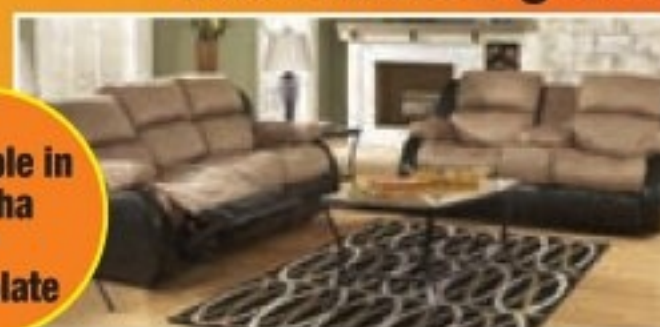


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PLUS

Stats

Black Friday by the numbers

RetailMeNot's latest Shopping Trend Report looked at more than 500,000 Black Friday sales and consumer habits. Here's what they found:

21%

Black Friday shoppers who report never missing a year

37%

The average discount off the original price on Black Friday

\$196

The average amount that shoppers plan to spend per person on their holiday list this year

Deal or no deal?

Retail. What to resist on Black Friday and how to shop smarter this year.

There's no doubt that Black Friday is brimming with bargains and steals. But put on your earmuffs, hardcore devotees, because an ugly truth lies ahead: Sometimes the hype is just hype, and retailers will roll out their best prices — and better quality products — later in December.

Did we just rekill Santa for you? Please accept our sincere apologies, and read on for expert tips on what to wait on this weekend.

MONICA WEYMOUTH
letters@metro.us

Toys

A quick disclaimer: If anything "Frozen" is on your kiddo's list, you should probably buy that right away (or, you know, last week). But for toys that aren't in such high demand, hold off. "We've been collecting data on Black Friday for 10 years," says Kyle James,

founder of coupon and bargain-hunting hotspot Rather-Be-Shopping.com. "There are definitely good Black Friday buys, but then there are bad Black Friday buys. One of the bad ones is

toys — Black Friday and Cyber Monday are not the best prices for toys." **When to buy:** According to James, the two weeks leading up to Christmas is when you see the really big price cuts.



Televisions

Before you line up for that big-screen TV, do your research on the brand and model. "The Black Friday deals on these look great, but the quality with some is so bad that they don't even stock them the rest of the year," warns James. **When to buy:** "If you're looking for a high-quality TV, there are much better deals in January and early February when the new models come out and the older ones go on sale," says James.



Don't buy that sweater yet! / HEMERA

Apparel

Although you'll score deals on fall clothes, winter apparel is not going to see significant discounts this weekend. **When to buy:** If you're looking for yourself and not for a gift, wait until

after Christmas, advises Kristen Nelson of RetailMeNot.com, a discount junkie's dream site. "The post-Christmas sales are really good," she says. "They're waiting for people to come back to return items."



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BLACK FRIDAY 24

Buy locally on Black Friday

Sales. It's not just the big-box stores with deals and steals. Shop these five boutiques and thrift stores for more unusual finds.

While you're winding down at the end of a long Thanksgiving day (or, as some of us like to think of it, Black Friday Eve), make sure you've got your shopping game plan worked out. Study this list of some of the coolest bargains at Philly's best small shops.

Adorn Boutique and Showroom

1314 Frankford Ave.
Deal time: 11 a.m. to 9 p.m.
Why go: Stock up on handcrafted jewelry and other goodies. Adorn is offering 20 percent off orders \$50 and over on Friday, Saturday and Monday, both in store and online with codes BlackFriday, SmallBusiness and CyberMonday.

Shoes



PROVIDED

Bus Stop Boutique

727 S. Fourth St.
Deal time: 11 a.m. to 8 p.m.
Why go: After stuffing yourself with turkey, stuff your closet with fashionable footwear. The 25 percent off sale applies on Small Business Saturday, too, from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Philly AIDS Thrift

710 S. Fifth St., 215-922-3186
Deal time: 7 a.m. to 11 a.m.
Why go: For four hours, Philly AIDS Thrift will be offering 50 percent off absolutely everything. Whether you're picking up a T-shirt or picking out furniture, you'll be supporting raising HIV/AIDS awareness, research and support.

Third Street Habit

153 N. Third St.
Deal time: 11 a.m. to 7 p.m.
Why go: Make all your denim dreams come true with 25 percent off. The deal runs through Cyber Monday.

Smak Parlour

219 Market St.
Deal time: 11 a.m. to 8 p.m.
Why go: Indulge your girly side. On Black Friday and Small Business Saturday, get a free winter accessory with a purchase of \$50 or more, plus free gift wrapping. **MOLLY CONGDON AND MARIA BARBERA**

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Cyber Monday. Shop in your PJs with these tips from shopping expert CEO Michelle Madhok

Don't wait until Monday to hunt for deals online

A lot of people think they should focus on in-store deals on Black Friday and online deals on Cyber Monday, but SheFinds.com CEO and shopping expert Michelle Madhok says online deals actually start on Thanksgiving Day. "When you need to shop quickly to score the deal, use an autofill tool for your credit card and shipping address," she says. "You can set up tools like Roboform to remember your passwords to your favorite sites and also fill in shipping addresses to various places." She suggests using cash-back sites such as Ebates.com and other shopping sites that allow you to earn up to 20 percent cash back on online purchases on top of retailer discounts.

Keep tabs on your items before you log on to buy them

One mistake Madhok says she sees people making is that they assume whatever it is they want to buy will be in stock when they want to buy it on Cyber Monday, and even in the weeks that follow. The closer we get to Christmas, the less likely that will be the case. "Make sure the items are in stock or guaranteed for delivery by a certain date or you might be stuck handing out IOUs," she says. "I've had this happen to me personally where a week after I made a purchase, I was sent an email saying it was out of stock and I had to scramble to find an alternative gift." Preparation is key to making Cyber Monday a stress-free shopping experience.

EMILY LAURENCE



Speediness still counts when shopping online, but at least there are no long lines.

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It feels so good to score deals. / INGRAM PUBLISHING

Black Friday: The Shortlist

Doorbusters. Here are the one-day sales and steals you don't want to miss.

Let's face it: As soon as your Halloween sugar rush wore off, holiday sale season was in full, frenzied swing. But for the true bargain hunters among us, Black Friday remains the main event, the undisputed High Holy Day of Cheap Stuff. (Although — insert judgy headshake here — most sales kick off on Thanksgiving.)

Braving the crowds this year? Here are the retailers that made our list — which, of course, we checked twice.

Old Navy

Starting at 4 p.m. on Thanksgiving and lasting through Friday, all Old Navy merchandise will be 50 percent off. If you're one of the first 100 customers in line, you'll get a chance card that could be worth \$1 million, which may or may not make up for missing Thanksgiving.

Tip

Spoiler alert

Look, we appreciate the Black Friday hunt. We do. But we'd be remiss not to mention that very few stores are offering any deals as good as those on Amazon, which has rolled

out an aggressive Black Friday takeover plan over the past couple years. The downside: If you never leave your couch, you can't get Mall Breakfast — and Mall Breakfast is important.

Target

The good people at Target put together a holiday sales package that is brimming with deals — and takes a solid 45 minutes to decipher. Here are the Black Friday highlights (which yes, you do owe us for): iPad Air 2 16GB plus a \$140 Target Gift Card for \$499, Beats by Dre Solo HD Headphones for \$97, Sony PlayStation 4 plus two games for \$399 and 40 percent off apparel and select LEGO sets.

JCPenney

Kicking off on Thursday at 5 p.m., doorbusters at Penney's include \$2.99 bath towels, \$9.99 kitchen electronics and 60 percent off holiday trim and decor. As is the tradition here, coupons are plentiful

and you will have to drag your mom out.

Staples

An unexpected Black Friday heavyweight, Staples doesn't disappoint this year. In addition to the weeklong sales, Black Friday in-store deals (beginning Thursday, of course) include a \$39.99 Android 7-inch tablet from JLab and a \$99.99 Samsung Galaxy Tablet Lite.

Steve Madden

Look, we can't pretend to get excited about the free charm bracelet that Steve Madden is handing out on Black Friday. But we do love their partnership with Uber: For every purchase you make at

the shoe store, you'll receive a code for an Uber voucher that you can use anytime (including on Friday, when you and those shopping bags could use a lift).

Walmart

Ah, yes: Ground Zero on Black Friday. Deals vary at each location, so head to Walmart.com for the local breakdown, as well as a map of each store so you know where to run when the doors open (but really, don't do that). If you're one of the first 100 people in line for Thursday's 6 p.m. opening, you're guaranteed to get the markdown price on select items, even if they sell out, including Vizio's 65-inch LED HDTV for \$648.

H&M

Line up early for scratch-off coupons at H&M, which will go to the first 100 shoppers. There are deals to be had all week, but Friday-only specials include \$4.95 women's sweaters, \$9.95 men's plaid button-downs and \$5 shirts for the kiddos.

Best Buy

Doorbusters abound at Best Buy, which opens at 5 p.m. on Thanksgiving and then has Friday hours starting at 8 a.m. In addition to the usual heavily discounted TVs (including an in-store-only Panasonic 50-inch LED HDTV for \$199) you can also pick up \$10 DVDs and a \$1 Samsung Galaxy S5—with a two-year contract because, real talk, nothing is \$1.

MONICA WEYMOUTH

To the Web!

Online-only offers

Stay in your jammies and pay a visit to these online retailers.

Sandro

Cash in at this French "It" label with up to 50 percent off the fall collection and 10 percent off sale- and full-price styles on Black Friday through Cyber Monday at Us.sandro-paris.com.

Giejo Swim

Warm-weather getaway in your holiday plans? Giejo Swim is offering 50 percent off its entire site, including sale merchandise, Thursday through Monday at Giejo.com. When you're checking out, enter the code THANKSGIVING50.

Two good deals

Product picks

Because the George Forman Grill will always have a place under the tree: The Super-Champ 3-Serving model is \$9.95 at Walmart on Black Friday.

A vacuum cleaner is not a great gift. Or even a good gift. It's possible that a vacuum cleaner does not even qualify as a gift. But, if you must, Dyson is the only way to go. Thursday through Monday, visit Dyson.com for \$150 off select models.



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- Go to Phoenix, Arizona, and celebrate The Wigwam resort's 85th birthday with 50 percent off luxury rooms.

5 Tips for surviving Thanksgiving travel

The exhaustion, the hopelessness, the endless gate change announcements — travelling over the holidays is not for the faint of heart. To help you get through it, heed these pointers from Jeanenne Tornatore, a senior editor at Orbitz. Just remember, an enormous quantity of food awaits you on the other end of your trip. You can do this!



Make holiday travel as painless as possible by being prepared.
NICOLAUS CZARNECKI, METRO

Punctuality pays

Sure, we've all played fast and loose with that whole "get there two hours early" rule, but Thanksgiving is not the time for those kinds of shenanigans.

"The TSA is great at what they do, but the lines are just going to be longer and slower the day before the holiday," says Tornatore. This is a time of year when people who don't travel often are flying. So even if you can shed your shoes in five seconds flat for the security checkpoint, less-savvy travelers will be slower.

Prepare like a Boy Scout

Step one: Print out your boarding pass at home. Showing up with your boarding pass in hand will save you from the crowds huddled around those little kiosks. Tornatore also recommends looking online ahead of time to learn where things are in the airport.

"It's always good to know what's available, whether you're trying to entertain your kids or you're going to be there over mealtime and you're looking for something to eat."

Gain the edge

And for that worst moment of all, when a flight cancellation occurs? Have your airline's number stored in your phone. Everyone at your gate is going to bolt for the service desk to try to rebook. "You walk over with them, but you get on the phone and dial that number because you might get somebody quicker on the phone that can actually get you one of the few seats left on the flights for that day," says Tornatore. Victory (and pumpkin pie) will soon be yours!

Charge it up

Pack extra chargers, especially if you have kids: You don't want any fights over devices, and having dead batteries is a recipe for disaster.

Tornatore also suggests using apps to keep on top of itinerary changes. "I think your smartphone really becomes your lifeline when you have delays and cancellations," she says.

Be a power packer

Let's be honest: The chances of delays are high this time of year. "Make sure to pack any necessities that you would really need in a 24-hour period in a carry-on bag: things like phone chargers, contact solution and case, any medications, stuff that you would need for your kids," advises Tornatore. You'll be glad you did if you get stranded.

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Kids and their tech habits

Trends. Facebook and cable TV are for old people.

Recently, digital agency Huge's headquarters were packed with people, all waiting for the expert panel to arrive. The panel wasn't a parade of startup CEOs. It was six 9- to 12-year-olds who were

there to tell everyone about their digital habits. Here's some of what they shared.

Computers vs. tablets

The pint-size experts seem to favor tablets over computers. They mostly like to watch YouTube or Netflix, but they also research free games to play alone or with their friends.



CHANCES ARE, THESE KIDS ARE ON YOUTUBE RIGHT NOW.

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TV

Interestingly, one 12-year-old says he doesn't see the point of live TV. "Why would you watch something with commercials? I record everything and watch it later," he says. Another trend is that they like watching an entire season of a show on Netflix instead of waiting a week between episodes.

Music

Even at 8 years old, these kids are buying music—at least with their parents' credit cards. Half the panel bought Taylor Swift's new album on iTunes, which is where they get all their music. Only one kid uses Spotify, while the others listen to music on the family computer or phone.



EMILY LAURENCE
@EmLaurence
emily.laurence@metro.us

What they 'like'

Social media



BILLY BECERRA

None of the kids on the panel are on Facebook or Twitter, although a few are on Instagram. Besides YouTube stars like Bethany Mota, they stick to following their friends, friends of friends and people who go to their school; they aren't really into following celebs. And this is encouraging: They don't care how many followers they have or how many "likes" their photos get.

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Horoscope

♎ Sagittarius | Nov. 22-Dec. 21. You need to feel stimulated and excited about life if you want to avoid a humdrum routine.

♏ Capricorn | Dec. 22-Jan. 20. A career change is imminent. Prepare to take advantage of a new opportunity. Strive for perfection and personal gains.

♐ Aquarius | Jan. 21-Feb. 18. The economic market is fluctuating, and you will need to be resilient if you want to remain solvent. A younger family member will pose a challenge.

♑ Pisces | Feb. 19-March 20. Your skills have made an impression on someone you may want to partner with. Get all of the details in writing. Love and romance are looking good.

♈ Aries | March 21-April 20. Familiarize yourself with banking and investment procedures. Money has a way of disappearing.

♉ Taurus | April 21-May 21. You can make a difference. If you examine the lessons that have helped you advance, you'll see that you are in a perfect position to teach or mentor others.

♊ Gemini | May 22-June 20. Don't feel that you have to face your problems alone. Your support system is better than you think.

♋ Cancer | June 21-July 22. Love is on the rise. It's a great time to cultivate a new relationship. Some interesting changes are looming on the home front.

♌ Leo | July 23-Aug. 22. Prove your worth. Promoting your talents and networking with business associates will bring attention your way. Your hard work will be a testament to your capabilities.

♍ Virgo | Aug. 23-Sept. 22. Don't let gossip get you down. If you check the facts, you'll discover that the truth is quite different from what you're told.

♎ Libra | Sept. 23-Oct. 22. Domestic situations may be tiresome. A trip to the mall will get you away from the people most likely to cause discord.

♏ Scorpio | Oct. 23-Nov. 21. The important people in your life will stay by your side no matter what. Mistakes happen, so don't feel bad if something goes wrong. **EUGENIA LAST**

Sudoku: Easy and hard

								3
			1		5		6	
	2	7			3			5
		1	9		6	3	2	
3			5		1			7
	6	9	4		7	1		
7			6			2	8	
	9		2		8			
1								

		2	5		6			8
9	1		7					
6			4					1
		3		8			4	
2	5						8	3
	8			7		2		
	2				9			4
				7		5	1	
5			3	4	8			

How to play
Fill in the grid so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1-9. There is no math involved. You solve the puzzle with reasoning and logic.

Crossword

Across

1 Pentathlon event
5 Opposite of sans
9 Bitter
14 Glen or dale
15 Hamlet
16 Goody-goody
17 Gradual change
19 Prepares potatoes
20 Sales person
21 Gouge
22 Come to an end
23 Foot pedal
25 Pike's discovery
26 Give — — break
27 Break a code
30 Treacherous one
33 Pueblo people
34 Sahib's rule
36 Osiris' beloved
37 Upholstery choice
38 Hardy green
39 "Diamond Lil"
40 Indications
41 Night sky streaker
42 Envelop
44 Daystar
45 "Woe is me!"
46 Like some doubts
50 Hazard
52 Galileo's home
53 Woodland female
54 Carried

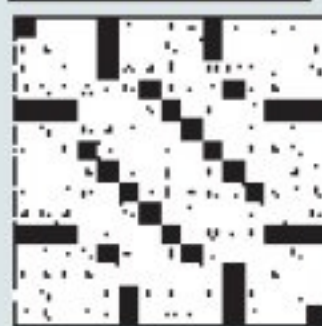
Down

55 Limit
57 UFO pilot
58 Gratis
59 Mr. Moto remark (2 wds.)
60 Watchful
61 Not so much
62 "Naked Maja" artist
1 Turn inside out
2 Patio stone
3 Wed on the run
4 Ocean dweller
5 — the Hun
6 Bass or soprano
7 Jedi ally
8 Cable channel
9 Becomes visible
10 Like an old house
11 Regrets deeply
12 Loafing
13 — Moines
18 Hypnotized
22 DeMille of epics
24 "Mister Ed" actor
25 Diary keeper
27 "No man is an island" poet
28 Stroller
29 Chaucer offering
30 Oomph
31 Witness's phrase (2 wds.)
32 Buttress

33 Weather systems

35 Jacuzzi feature
37 Absolutely required
38 Hong —
40 Prominent
41 The Rumba King
43 Money maker
44 Gets smart with
46 Dice throws
47 NW state
48 Loud
49 Columbus' port
50 Survey
51 Toledo's lake
52 Skin opening
54 Meadow murmur
55 Grey Cup org.
56 Scott Joplin composition

Yesterday's answer



Letters

Untold stories

I was in tears when I sat in front of my television this past Thursday evening hearing President Barack Obama talk about his executive decision to make changes to the immigration system that has failed many in this country. I cried for the countless individuals that I have met from a young age here who have suffered from being in the shadows. I found it interesting when I read or heard others' reactions, the voices of anger, resentment and fear regarding Obama's immigration fairness/reform speech. People, did you even listen?

As a social worker working with immigrant groups that don't have "papers," I hear the terrifying stories of women

being sexually harassed at work, people being emotionally abused, even physically, and wages not being paid. I sit in frustration hearing these stories, wanting to help, but all they want is for me to listen.

They won't stand up to the unfairness for fear of retaliation of losing their employment or being deported. They are hard-working and their priority is their family. It isn't a free pass, but it's acknowledging those that have worked hard and have been law-abiding to be free from living in the shadows.

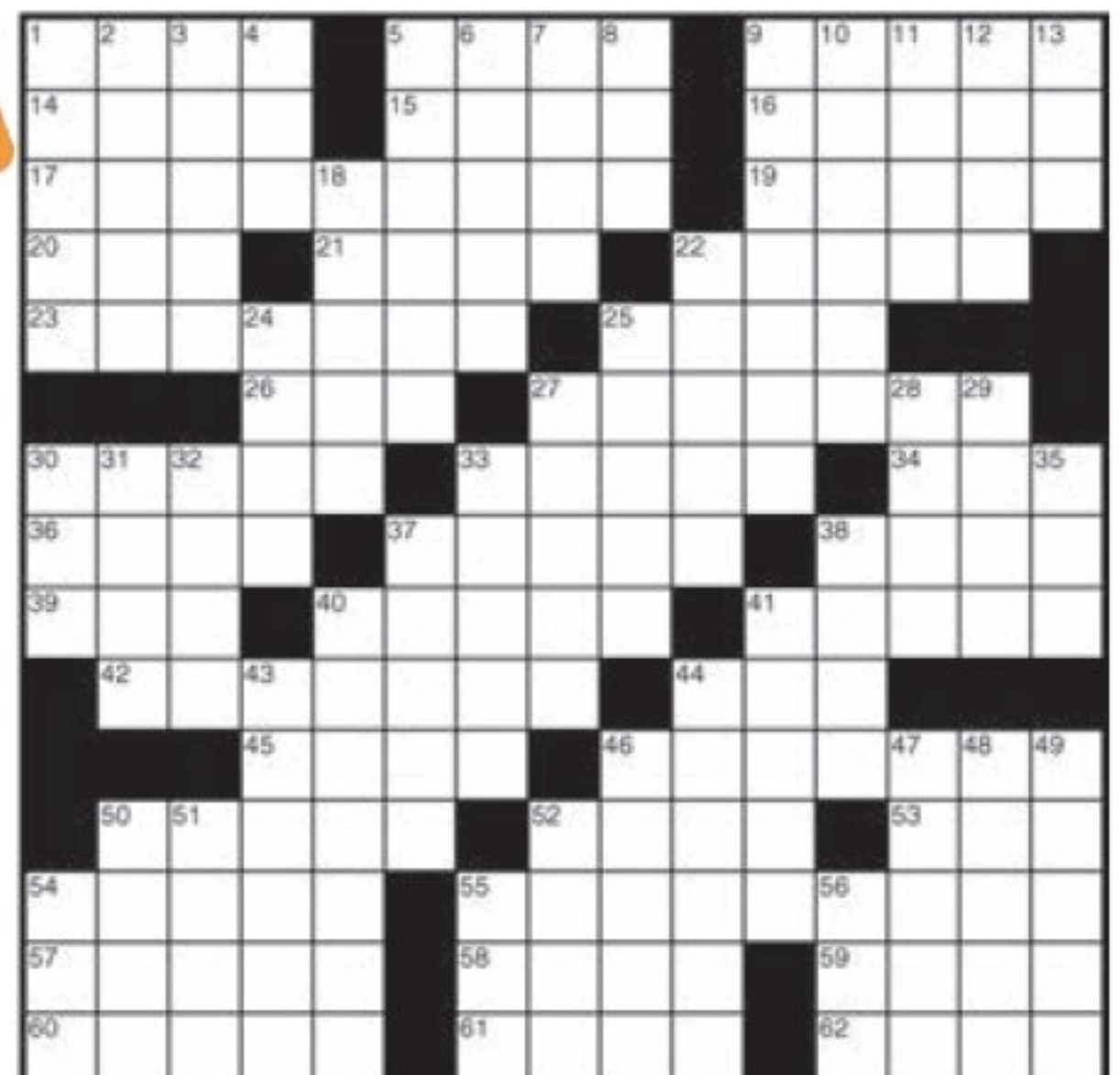
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Use your smartphone to find today's crossword answers! Download and open the Blippar app on your smartphone and hold the screen over the puzzle.



Eagles excited to spend Thanksgiving in Dallas

NFL. Eagles have quick turnaround against the NFC East co-leaders on Thursday.

From the minute the Eagles' schedule came out a few months ago, there has been one day circled in the sports calendars of all Philadelphia sports fans: Eagles and Cowboys, Thanksgiving day.

And not surprisingly, the players themselves can't wait to take the field under the watchful eye of full-bellied Americans stuffed with turkey and eager to watch America's game.

"I've seen it played on Thanksgiving before," Mark Sanchez said after Sunday's win against the



Sanchez will get his first taste of NFC East action Thursday. / GETTY IMAGES

Titans. "I know it's a big-time rivalry. We're in the third quarter and people are screaming about the Dallas game while this game is still going on. But

I'll get into it throughout this next week."

It was almost as if the Eagles (and their fans) were happy not to just have won Sunday to improve to 8-3

Quoted

"I've never played on Thanksgiving before. This is a big prime-time game and everybody is going to be eating turkey, so hopefully we can eat some turkey with a smile after the game."

Brandon Graham

on the year, but also to be able to finally focus on the game that really matters — the battle for first place in the NFC East.

"I'm really excited, man," Fletcher Cox said. "Looking forward to playing these guys. We are ready to roll, we are ready for Thursday."

But for the coaching staff, it wasn't quite all

hype and excitement.

Chip Kelly and his assistants spent a portion of Sunday looking ahead to Thursday, even before the Birds took the field against the Titans. And then, as soon as Kelly and company fulfilled their media obligations, they went right back to it — getting ready for Dallas.

"As a staff we just came back here right after the game and started game planning on all three phases for Dallas and kind of what they did," Kelly told the press Monday morning. "Then, obviously got the last game in — we didn't get the coaches' copy until early this morning, but we had to get most of our plan in place last night."



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3

SPORTS

Hot stove update

Red Sox make noise

Don't expect the Red Sox to ever put together back-to-back losing seasons. After a down year in 2014, Boston announced two huge free agent moves Monday. They signed shortstop Hanley Ramirez to a \$88 million contract, and also agreed on a deal with third baseman Pablo Sandoval.



4

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FORGET THE SUPER BOWL THIS YEAR

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Idle thoughts

- The saddest sports story of the year is Ryan Howard's ugly legal battle with his twin brother and parents. Howard should tell these free-loaders to go out and hit 58 homers in a season, to lead a team to a world championship, the way he did. Now we know why Howard said we wouldn't want to be him. He's right.
- First the Red Sox walked away from Cole Hamels trade talks because they found GM Ruben Amaro Jr.'s demands unrealistic, and then negotiations took a negative turn for Cuban slugger Yasmanny Tomas. Well, at least now we know who's still in charge of personnel on the Phillies. It's Amaro, not Pat Gillick. Ugh.
- The Flyers have always been adept at honoring former players, but that Eric Lindros-John LeClair ceremony last week was bogus. Lindros didn't acknowledge the organization after playing here for eight years, and Bob Clarke — his idol and the GM who acquired him — blew off the event. Time has not healed all wounds.

This is unfortunate timing, I admit, but here's a healthy portion of reality to serve with your turkey and trimmings on Thursday. The Eagles will not win the Super Bowl this season. I hereby withdraw my bold prediction. It's not going to happen — despite Sunday's easy win, despite a terrific 8-3 record, despite the continued success of Chip Kelly.

There are several reasons for this unwelcome concession. The biggest is the Eagles defense, which is not good enough to stop the best offenses in the NFL. Also, Mark Sanchez — and Nick Foles, before his injury — are not Super Bowl quarterbacks. And finally, Kelly still needs a little more experience before he'll be ready to claim the Lombardi Trophy.

When this season ends after the first or second round of the playoffs, the Eagles will look back with disappointment at two injuries that foiled their ultimate goal — a season-ender to linebacker DeMeco Ryans and the six- to eight-week loss of quarterback Nick Foles.

Ryans was, and is, the soul of the defense. The stats don't lie. Before Ryans was hurt, the Eagles camouflaged their weaknesses — Bradley Fletcher, Nate Allen, and depth at linebacker — behind his indomitable spirit and tireless work ethic. It is no coincidence that the Eagles gave up 22 points per game before he was hurt and have allowed 33 since the injury.

The current defense has two players who will destroy any chance the Birds have to go deep in the playoffs. Fletcher's side of the field has been a crime scene from the time Ryans left. The cornerback cannot cover good receivers, and has become prone to stupid penalties because of his frustration. Casey Matthews, for want of a better word, stinks.

Meanwhile, on offense Sanchez is capable of making precise passes



LeSean McCoy's resurgence may not be enough to lift the Eagles to Super Bowl contenders. / GETTY IMAGES

Cataldi's final thought

"The bottom line is, my heart spoke before my head when I predicted three months ago an end to the championship drought. It will happen, and Kelly will be the coach who does it. But not this year. Sorry."

like the sideline laser to Riley Cooper that set up a third-quarter touchdown against Tennessee, but he cannot be trusted to make the smart decisions mandated by Kelly's offense. The two interceptions he gave up on Sunday were not fatal errors against the awful Titans; they will be against the Packers, Cardinals or (gulp) Cowboys.

Foles was not much better than Sanchez before his injury, but he was more than good enough last year, with his uncanny accuracy and knack for protecting the ball. His performance last season inspired my

original Super Bowl prediction. Now, the aura is gone. In all likelihood, 2013 will be the best season of Foles' career.

Kelly has remained brilliant in his second NFL season, but he remains a work in progress when it comes to personnel.

His 2014 draft is looking more and more like a major disappointment — especially first-round pick Marcus Smith, who has provided no relief at linebacker after Ryans' injury.

I guess it's crazy to wish everyone a Happy Thanksgiving now, isn't it?

NBA power rankings | by James Toscano

No. 1



Grizzlies (12-2)

Led by a relatively surprising early MVP favorite in Marc Gasol, the Grizzlies are man-handling teams with their toughness. Just ask the Clippers, who Memphis took down in a big way, 107-91, Sunday.

No. 2



Warriors (10-2)

That big sigh of relief you're hearing is from the Warriors after hearing Andrew Bogut's orbital contusion is not serious after a CT scan on his face came back negative. This team keeps on rolling.

No. 3



Raptors (11-2)

They haven't cooled off yet, and there's no reason to believe they will. This Raptors team is dangerous on both ends (third in points per game and fifth in points allowed) and may sneakily have some of the best fans in basketball.

No. 4



Spurs (9-4)

Holding opponents to a league-best 91.3 points per game while spreading out minutes from top to bottom in the lineup. Just two Spurs average more than 30 minutes per game.

No. 5



Rockets (10-3)

It's troubling to see Dwight Howard miss games so early in the season. His health is obviously important to Houston's success, especially after trading away fellow center Omer Asik.

No. 6



Mavericks (10-4)

Considered by many to be one of the most improved teams in the offseason, the Mavs ripped off six straight wins before falling to the Dwight Howard-less Rockets over the weekend. These guys are a tough out every night.

No. 7



Wizards (9-3)

There are a few teams beginning to separate from the pack in the East, and the Wizards are one of them. They'll get a chance to beat the Cavs again on Wednesday in Cleveland.

No. 8



Blazers (10-3)

Make it a league-best seven straight wins for the Trail Blazers. With Philly on tap for Monday, that'll most likely extend to eight straight wins. Getting some extra help from the bench this season has been huge.

No. 9



Bulls (8-5)

It looks like Derrick Rose is going to be a game-time decision for the rest of his career. Jimmy Butler, on the other hand, is really shining for the Bulls this season, leading them in points (20.4) and steals (1.5).

No. 10



Suns (9-5)

The Suns have four legit guards in Goran Dragic, Eric Bledsoe, Isaiah Thomas and Gerald Green and the Morris brothers. An exciting team, for sure.

No. 11



Heat (8-6)

A strained hamstring has kept Dwyane Wade out of the Heat's last six games. They've gone 3-3 in those games, and getting him back is crucial — especially since some guy named LeBron is no longer there to help.

No. 12



Clippers (7-5)

A disappointing bunch so far, as a championship should really be on the minds of everybody on this team. Doc Rivers isn't finding it as easy to get his team to play defense in L.A. as it was in Boston.

No. 13



Cavaliers (5-7)

The Cavs just aren't ready to win as a team yet, suffering four straight losses, including two big ones to the Wizards and Raptors. LeBron has his hands full — but he asked for this.

No. 14



Pelicans (7-5)

There is no stopping Anthony Davis. The future MVP (some day) scored a career-high 43 points against the Jazz on Saturday in all sorts of ways. And he did it with just one eyebrow. Amazing.

No. 15



Kings (8-5)

Kings fans are just happy that they have ownership that cares about winning again. Will the Kings make the playoffs this year? It's unlikely — but they're trending in the right direction for sure.

No. 16



Bucks (7-7)

One of the surprise teams of the season so far, the young Bucks had some momentum going before they ran into the Raptors and Wizards, two of the East's better teams.

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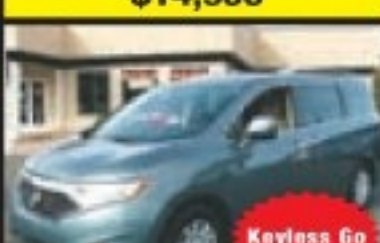
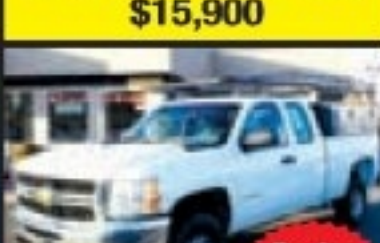
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